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UNITY – THE LONGING OF OUR TIMES
A talk by Chiara Lubich — Experiences

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2 *UNITY — THE LONGING OF OUR TIMES: A special on the spirituality of unity of the Focolare Movement.*

4 *Chiara Lubich, founder of the Focolare Movement, addressed 7,000 participants at the 1982 Katholikentag in Germany. We are publishing her talk in this issue.*

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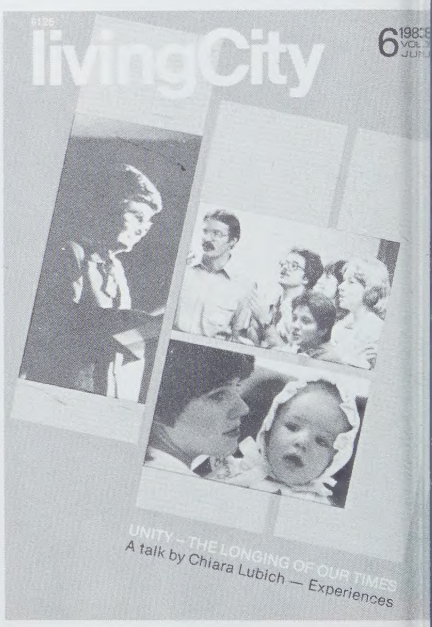

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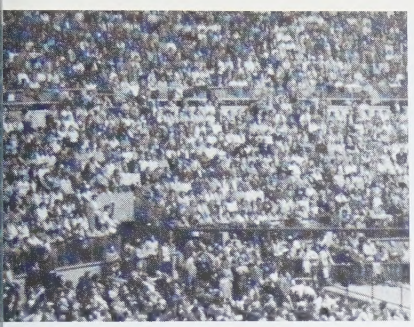

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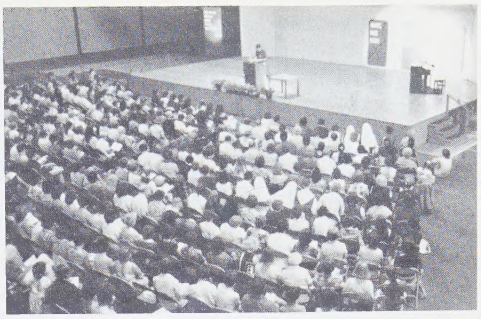

26 *MARIAPOLIS '83: "Working for a more united world" is the theme of this year's summer gathering of the Focolare Movement. See page 26 for details.*

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UNITY-THE LONGING

compiled by ANNE LINGLEY

Everyday we witness in this world which we love, the most painful wounds brought about by endless disunities. And yet our modern world longs and seeks for unity.

Unity has been the theme of the many Focolare Movement gatherings which have taken place around the world in recent months. In fact, the specific vocation of the Movement is to work toward the fulfillment of Jesus' prayer, "Father may they all be one" (John 17:21).

Chiara Lubich, founder of the Focolare Movement, has spoken on this aspect of its spirituality on various occasions inviting all to live this extraordinary reality. One such occasion was the 1982 Katholikentag, an ecumenical convention held in Dusseldorf, West Germany. In the following pages we are publishing the text of this talk and also experiences of people from around the world.

OF OUR TIMES

Photo credit: Gabriele Marsili

Chiara Lubich to the 1982 Katholikentag

Chiara Lubich addressed the 1982 Katholikentag, held in West Germany, on two occasions, each time to more than 7,000 people. The talk on unity, which we are publishing here, introduced the ecumenical round-table discussion.

We can see that there are many tensions in the world today. There are tensions between East and West, between North and South, tensions in Central America and in the Middle East. There are threats of war. There are the phenomena of terrorism and other evils.

Yet, if we pay attention to the signs of our times, we must conclude paradoxically that, notwithstanding all these tensions, our world is moving towards unity. For instance, we have witnessed how in the Christian world the Holy Spirit is urging the different Churches and ecclesial communities to unite after centuries of indifference and struggle. We can see it in the thoughts of the most recent Popes. If we read the documents of Pope Paul VI, we can see that his teachings are all imbued with this idea of unity. Our present Pope, too, is a sign of unity, because through his travels all over the world he extends a universal embrace to all peoples. Another sign of this thrust towards unity is the fact that the representatives of different Chuches are working to achieve unity among Christians.

We can see it in the fact that Christians are opening up to the dialogue with the faithful of other religions, and that they have a greater desire to come in contact with all people of goodwill. The documents of the Second Vatican Council, too, often reflect the theme of unity.

Still another sign has been the institution of secretariats and other specialized bodies within the Catholic Church and other Churches for the purpose of promoting unity among Christians, or of deepening already-existing dialogues.

Unity is even spoken about in ideologies that we cannot share because our faith does not allow us to; even they try to resolve the problems of the world in a global sense.

International organizations are talking about it, and nowadays the means of mass communication are actually able to transform our world into a community, a family.

Yes, it is evident from all these signs that there is a thrust towards unity in the world. If there is a sentence in the Gospel that the Holy Spirit seems to be emphasizing today, especially for us Christians, it is, "May they all be one"[1].

If there is one page of the Gospel that the Holy Spirit seems to be calling to our attention it is Jesus' prayer for unity in the 17th Chapter of John. Therefore, a heartfelt invocation that it would be good for Christians today to repeat would be, "Lord, make me an instrument of unity."

In our times, we cannot call ourselves followers of Christ if we don't strive for unity, and if we are not in tune with the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

Unity. But what is it, and who

(Continued on page 6)

RIGHT: A photo of the crowd in the hall.
BELOW: The discussion was moderated by Klaus Hemmerle, bishop of Aachen, West Germany (third from left). Various personalities of the Catholic and Evangelical world were present.

(Continued from page 4)

could bring it about? And if our contribution is needed, what should it be?

Unity is the ideal of Jesus. He came into the world to achieve unity, to make us one with him, one with the Father through him, and one with one another.

Unity is the task of the Church, which continues Christ today and, through the grace of God, brings about the unity of humanity with God and of people with one another.

Christian unity is clearly the work of God. Mankind could not accomplish it alone. We can only do our part, whatever God is asking of us, so that his grace can produce the maximum effect.

In this light, then, let us consider what our contribution must be. If we look at Jesus as a child would, we see that he taught us two things which are actually one: to be children of one Father, and brothers and sisters of one another. In other words, we must always fix our gaze on God, the one Father of so many children, and see all people as children of the same Father. This means, therefore, that in our thoughts and affections we will always have to go beyond every limitation set up by our merely human way of seeing things, and constantly aim at a universal brotherhood in the one Father: God.

This is the first simple idea, one which demands a constant effort on our part to acquire and help others acquire, with the grace of God, a supernatural vision of things. It is one which calls us to love all, because all of us are children of God; it calls us to see everyone as a candidate for unity with God and neighbor, transcending our mentality, our likes and dislikes, and our at times unconscious prejudices.

To love all. To love our neighbor. But who is our neighbor? We know this; we don't have to look too far. Our neighbor is the person next to us in the present moment of our life. Right now, all of you are my neighbors. And I am your neighbor; and so is the person sitting next to you.

In order to be Christian, we have to love our neighbor now, in a concrete way. Not in the future therefore, but in the present; not in an abstract way, but in a real way.

To love our neighbor. But what does it mean to love? Jesus showed us when he died on the cross for all of us, and before his death he gave us an example of this love when he washed his disciples' feet.

If Jesus, our Lord and Master, washed our feet, then this means that to love is to serve.

If he who is God washed the feet of us human beings, it means that none of us human beings is exempt from serving anyone else. Christianity is love, and love is service. All Christians, no matter what positions any of them may hold, have only one duty: to serve, even if they teach, or must correct others, or hold positions of authority.

To serve. To do it might require a conversion from all of us. It might lead us to re-examine all our relationships — in the family, at work, at school . . . among Catholics, among all Christians, with the faithful of other religions, with non-believers, with good and bad alike. . . .

To serve.

This universal brotherhood that Christianity offers, this universal love that God asks of us, certainly frees our hearts from the bondage inherent in a merely human approach to life.

This universal love lets us experience freedom from the bar-

"For a united world" was the theme of the 1980 Genfest held May 17 in Rome. It brought 50,000 young people of the Focolare Movement from all over the world together for an intense experience of unity expressed through mimes, songs, dances. The event concluded the following day with a Mass celebrated by Pope John Paul II in St. Peter's Square.

riers between rich and poor, among races, countries and generations. Yet if we are Christians, if Christ, the Christ the Crucified Lord, is always before our eyes, we must understand that we, too, have to make ourselves slave of someone — of our neighbor.

What is the best way to serve, however? The answer lies in a few words which we should never forget: *To make ourselves one.* To make ourselves one with all the people we meet. This means sharing their feelings, carrying their burdens, making their problems our own and working at them as such, because love has made them ours.

We must *make ourselves one* in everything except sin.

This is what St. Paul meant when he said: "For the weak I made myself weak. I made myself all things to all men in order to save some at any cost"[2].

Of course it is not easy to make ourselves one. It requires a constant death to ourselves. Yet this is the very reason why this way of loving proves to be an almost infallible method of apostolate. When others are loved in this way, sooner or later they are won over by Christ who lives in us through the death of our ego. St. Paul expressed it this way: "So though I am not a slave of any man I have made myself the slave of everyone so as to win as many as I could"[3].

Therefore, we must love all, serve all, and win all over to Christ.

We must see everyone, no matter who he or she may be, as a potential Christ. Christ who, at times, has to come to life; Christ who has to grow, to live, to die, to rise, and to be glorified. We cannot rest until this happens; until, through our continual service, we see in every neighbor the spiritual countenance of Christ.

Dear brothers and sisters, this is not the place, and there is not enough time, to share with you, as I would like, the countless episodes which prove the effectiveness of this Christian method of building the kingdom of God. However, the life of Jesus is enough of an example. He, more than anyone else, chose to *make himself one*, to serve people in order to win over the world. He is God, and he became one of us. For the sake of us sinners, he who did not know sin became sin (cf. 2 Cor. 5:21).

To make ourselves one.

At times it may happen that we are not the only ones trying to do this; that others are trying to do the same. In other words, we may find that, through the grace of God, two or more of us are constantly trying to make ourselves one, to love one another.

What happens then? What is the result?

The result is unity: unity in Christ. And unity in Christ is a very special reality. It brings with it an extraordinary richness — the presence of Jesus himself who said, "Where two or three meet in my name, I shall be there with them"[4].

We could say that unity *is* Jesus.

Just as when a flame melts down two metals it doesn't produce a mixture but a combination, and the result is a third element, it is the same with unity. When two or more Christians love one another with the fire of divine love, the result is not just a simple union of hearts, a gathering of people, a group. The result is Jesus himself.

Unity.

Have we ever had the possibility of experiencing it?

The first few times we experience this supernatural reality we cannot help but be amazed. One can sense then that unity is peace, joy, love, conviction, consolation, ardor, heroism, and greatest generosity. Unity is light. It is Jesus among us. No words can adequately express what it is. Who would dare to define it? It is ineffable, like God. One can experience it. One can almost see it. One can rejoice for it. In fact everyone rejoices when there is unity, and everyone suffers when, for some lack of love, it is no longer there.

Unity is Jesus. All the effects we notice when he is present among us are the fruits of the Spirit, of his Spirit.

The Risen Lord said, "And know that I am with you always: yes, to the end of time"[5]. And he did remain with us.

As we know, he remained in the Church; in fact, the Church is the body of Christ. He is with every Christian, especially with those who announce the Gospel. He is present in the Eucharist. We can find him especially in the "least" and in those who suffer. He speaks through those he has called to guide his Church. He is present in his words. He is with the Christian community; wherever its members are gathered . . . Jesus is there.

Jesus is present in the world today in all these ways.

Yet at this time, when the world is striving for unity, people seem to be especially sensitive to his presence in communities gathered in his name, where members are united in that mutual love which makes them ready to die for one another.

Pope Paul VI said that people today listen to those who bear witness with their life to what they say, rather than to teachers. If teachers are listened to, it is because they have first borne witness with their life to what they say.

This is confirmed by the fact that Mother Teresa of Calcutta and others of our time are sought out and listened to. Their words are effective and highly respected because, just as Jesus did, these people began by "doing" and then proceeded to "teach."

As Paul VI said, unity generates the presence of Jesus in our midst. It expresses him; it reveals him; it manifests him.

Unity shows the Risen Lord to the world, and whoever experiences unity meets Jesus and therefore believes. "May they all be one . . . so that the world may believe"[6].

Dearest brothers and sisters, this is the moment in our Christian life when we must bring this presence of Jesus into relief as never before.

We must do it among the Christians of our own Church or ecclesial community and among Christians of different denominations.

While the Holy Spirit (with the collaboration of members of various ecumenical movements, through the studies of the theological commissions, through the meetings of different leaders, and through common prayer) is rebuilding the unity of the Christian world, we must remember that what unites us is much more than what divides us, and make an effort to live in accordance with this. We cannot deprive the world of our common witness. Even if it is not yet possible to share every outward expression of our faith, Jesus can live in our midst. Our common baptism and our mutual love guarantee this.

In different points of the world small cities of the Focolare Movement have been built. They are called Permanent Mariapolis. The citizens strive to live the Gospel in unity. Photos on these two pages were taken at the Permanent Mariapolis in Argentina.

Anyone who has tried to live this way knows that the presence of Jesus in the midst of Christians is a reality which carries with it an immeasurable ecumenical thrust. It is perhaps the method which God our Father prefers us to use in our journey towards unity. Hasn't our lack of love, as the great Patriarch Athenagoras I confirmed, been one of the main reasons for the existing divisions?

Above all, God wants to see love flourish among all his Christian children. He wants to see that love which is their only distinguishing feature and by which the world will recognize them.

We know it. When we set out to proclaim Christ to the faithful of other religions, for example, we may often hear that bitter reproach: "How can we believe in you if you are divided?"

My friends, let's remove every prejudice, every fear, and every preoccupation and establish among all Christians a strong current of mutual esteem, mutual acceptance, and mutual love. Let's work at establishing among as many Christians as possible the presence of the Risen Lord. He will be the one to form us into that "Easter People" that we should be.

We must love one another to the extent that the many people we encounter experience the presence of Jesus in our midst. Then forgetting about our quarrels, they will say to themselves: "Just as it happens that every family experiences disagreements, differences of opinion, and difficult moments, it has happened in Christianity as well. But now these Christians have shown us how united they are. Their unity is convincing and has attracted us. They have the truth, and its name is Christ."

We must love one another to the extent that all who think that in the Christian world Christ is still dead, buried by the divisions among us, may sense in their hearts the voice of that angel who said to those who seeking Jesus in the tomb: "He is risen. He is not here"[7].

The Risen Lord in our midst can make this happen starting now.

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1) John 17:21. 2) 1 Corinthians 9:22. 3) 1 Corinthians 9:19. 4) Matthew 18:20. 5) Matthew 28:20. 6) John 17:21. 7) Mark 16:6.

Experiences of life shared by members of the Focolare Movement

NOTHING WILL BE LOST IF...

"Finally a day for Anna!" Jean and I said to each other as we gathered together the things we needed for the trip to the country to visit our friend. We were tired but happy to be going: it had been such a long-awaited visit . . .

A short trip brought us to the little town where she lived. Although close to New York City, it had the look and feel of a country village. The trees were just coming into bloom. Wild flowers were springing up here and there by the roadside, and the bright sunshine and fragrant air increased even more our anticipation of a pleasant day of conversation and long walks.

Anna was waiting for us with breakfast ready. We had just sat down when the doorbell rang. Upon returning, Anna smiled a little uncertainly. "It's a surprise visit from my sister," she told us. "She's come to spend the weekend."

A young woman entered the room, chattering to Anna. She was dressed in the latest style and immediately came over to us. "I don't think I know you," she said. I tried to give her my best smile and warmest welcome but in my heart I was disappointed at this turn of events.

When would we ever have another day free to spend with Anna? Look at the hour at which we got up just to get here and spend a few short hours together. Anna had been waiting for us for months . . . now all our plans were falling apart. "No!" I told myself. "Nothing will be lost if you start loving!"

My friends read this decision on my face and the atmosphere which had clouded over immediately lightened.

Anna's sister Rose was interested in art, and was thrilled to find such attentive and interested listeners. She was a bottomless well of information, and she talked for hours on all the latest developments in the field.

Toward evening she announced that she was so happy with the day spent with us that she wanted to prepare a special dinner. We no longer had any hope of spending time with Anna. It meant renewing our decision to love her sister as if we had gone there just to be with her. Just as we had interested ourselves in her love of art, we attempted to share her great enthusiasm over the meal she was preparing.

Dinner was excellent and the moment of departure came quickly. I left the room for a moment to get my purse, and returned to find Rosa in the doorway. "Who are you two anyway?" she demanded. She stood where she was, awaiting an explanation.

The story of our life given for the cause of unity, came out in a simple and profound way. Her silence pulled the words out of me, and the unity among the three of us, the presence of Jesus in our midst, I hope, gave the words all their impact.

"You're talking about God," she said when I had finished, "but I gave up on him already."

"He didn't give up on you though," we replied. She looked at us thoughtfully. Then, with hesitation and infinite sadness, she briefly recounted the story of her wild and inconclusive life.

"Now I'm so busy," she concluded. "I have so many things to take care of: family, work, business . . ."

"And your soul?" I found myself asking.

She didn't answer. In silence she watched us leave — thoughtful and relieved, it seemed to us, of a great burden.

The next day she wrote us that she had made her peace with God.

S.S. - United States

THIS IS HOW DIEUDONNE' CONVINCED ME

I had gone to visit Dieudonne' in order to ask him a few questions regarding the way in which a Christian should act. Among other things, I asked him how it could be possible for a man to love by putting himself at the service of a woman or a child, people traditionally considered "inferior" in African society. Dieudonne' attempted to answer me. He spoke at great length, however, he wasn't able to convince me. In fact, that very idea of service was unthinkable to me. So after we had talked for about two hours, I decided to go on my way.

I had just said goodbye to him and was walking away when a sound I heard made me turn back. A little girl who had been walking by with a pail of water on her head had fallen down right there, just a few feet away from me. At this point, while everyone around was laughing scornfully without lifting a finger to help her, Dieudonne' rushed over to give the little girl a hand; he helped her get up out of the mud. But he did not even stop at that, however; he went to the well to refill the bucket and carried it home for her.

I stood there looking on in silence; many of Dieudonne"s neighbors were doing the same. We were amazed by the fact that Dieudonne' had acted without the least bit of self-interest. As far as I was concerned, that simple gesture he had made was far more eloquent than our entire conversation.

B.W. - Republic of Cameroon

View of the Permanent Mariapolis in Fontem, West Cameroons. People from all over Africa visit this little city.

NOT THE "BLACK SHEEP" AFTER ALL

One of the first things which struck me upon discovering the Gospel was the importance of recognizing that Jesus lives in every neighbor. This idea made me immediately think of my brother Tom, whom we considered to be the "black sheep" of the family. In fact, at that time he had already been in prison for four years.

I began to write to him with the enthusiasm of someone who desperately wants to make up for lost time. At first, I was waiting for some sort of reaction on his part, an acknowledgement of some kind, any response at all... But none came. I understood then that I shouldn't pity him or treat him like someone who had done something wrong but rather as a child of the same Father, which he was, in fact, above all else.

In my letters and postcards I avoided referring to my "discovery" of God in order to speak instead that I knew interested him, like music for instance. However, I didn't know what, if any, effect my correspondence was having on him. It went on like this for two years. Then one day I received a note from him in which he thanked me for my constant correspondence and expressed a desire to see me.

From that moment on, the stumbling blocks in our relationship were done away with. I managed to get him a jazz guitar, which I knew he would like a lot. In turn, he gave me his own classical guitar.

The death of our father came as a very hard blow to Tom, especially because he had been unable to rehabilitate himself in my father's eyes. I tried to stay closer than ever to him then, and afterwards I wrote to him even more frequently.

It was at this point that he asked about me and my friends, giving me an opening to tell him in my next letter about my way of life as a Christian. I certainly had no desire to "preach" to him; I only wanted to share my life. He must have sensed this attitude on my part. In fact, it seemed that he had been deeply moved by what I had written: he confided to the me soon after that he felt an overwhelming need for God.

For some time now, Tom and a number of his fellow inmates have been meeting together, trying to help one another to live the words of the Gospel.

Now Tom and I are much more than blood relatives: our love of God makes us one.

M.T. - Scotland

Photo credit Gabriele Varsili

Stopping a busy routine to give directions to a driver might be one of the countless daily opportunities to serve others.

To love is to serve

by IGINO GIORDANI

The key to life (relations with God and our neighbors) bears the name 'love' and to love is to serve. It is all there. Simple, as the things of God are.

Before God one stands as before the Creator, the Almighty, the Judge, even if he is Love and the Father and makes us one with him. The liturgy with which we honor him is service; and likewise the works by which we live, which are to be done in order to love him and serve him in this life.

Before man, before each man as superior (St. Vincent used to say: a master), the lower his social position, the higher one considers him. This reality simplifies human relationships enormously: I am a servant, the other is a master. I serve for love of God, because in serving the other I serve (i.e. I love) God; the other bestows on me the gift of allowing me to reach, by passing through him, the King of Kings; he allows me to love, in him my brother, God the Father. As a result of this, in addition to the worth deriving from creation and redemption, of which he is the object my brother is for me the practical equivalent of Christ: he is the image of God and I must treat him as I would treat Jesus. In reality when dealing with my neighbor, I enter definitely into relationship with God.

But if this is so, it is absurd and useless to complain if I am not loved and therefore served by other men. I have the right to serve them, not to be served. Therefore if my dedication meets with ingratitude, incomprehension and abandonment on the part of others I must not grieve on my own accounts; if at all, on their account. My duty is to give, not to receive. "In love, what counts is to love"; "to love" (active), not "to be loved" (passive).

This activity, this giving, this service, is the real stuff of life, and of a life which does not disappoint, and such service wins eternal life.

In dark hours, when this clarity is obscured, I must see myself as being like Christ on the Cross, scorned, wounded, abandoned. Universally abandoned.

But, it was by this that he accomplished the Redemption and rose again and has been loved for twenty centuries by the flower of humanity: by the martyrs, who offer him their blood; by the apostles, who give him their labors; by the virgins, who for his sake renounce everything else; by parents, who for his sake brave the adventure of the family.

And then, precisely when the desolation caused by desertion and the anguish arising from my failures comes hurtling down upon me like a hurricane, then I attain the highest dignity in the closest conformity with the Abandoned one: precisely then do I serve, serve all the more the cause of the Church, of redemption, of my own eternal happiness.

When I remain alone in this desolation, if it is made fruitful by disinterested and unrequited service, then I am one with the Blessed Trinity, with Mary, Virgin and Mother, with the Blessed in heaven and with souls on earth that love. I enjoy the company of none of them: but I am in unity and solidarity with all of them, in that total communion which is the Church.

And so I must not look for gratitude or services from others: I have no right to that. If in serving my neighbor I serve God through him, I should look for gratitude, if at all, from God. And this means, I look for everything from God, nothing from men; only, I look for it not as gratitude (poor me! all that I have and all that I give is his) but as a gift, even if he loves to give it as recompense or reward to the one who serves him.

Therefore, if in human relationships someone has the right to be disappointed, it is not I but my brother, whoever he may be, because he indeed has the right to be served; and if I do not serve him he has the right to be disappointed and to complain about me, and God with him.

Once acquits oneself of one's divine and human task of contributing to the Passion of Christ, by suffering, and not by making others suffer. And this suffering also, because of the ingratitude or the offenses of one's brother, becomes, in the economy of the divine justice and charity, a service. A serving of God in one's neighbor. The evil that comes to us then from our brother becomes a good in the service of our brother. In serving, everything is turned into good.

To serve is to reign: this is the revolution of the Cross

From the book **Diary of Fire**

THE UNTIMELY SALESMAN

It was the last day of the month. I was way behind in my work, and as if that weren't enough to cope with. I even had to do the work of one of my colleagues who was out sick.

That afternoon, someone knocked at the door of my office. It was a furniture salesman hoping to sell me some file cabinets. He was the last person in the world that I would have wanted to see at that moment. Before I could even open my mouth, he proceeded to display the promotional material he had in his catalog. I was just about to interrupt him when it occurred to me that even he, the untimely salesman, was a neighbor to be loved.

He seemed very much ill-at-ease, and kept repeating the same things over and over. As for me, I really tried not to show my impatience (which stemmed from the fact that within a few hours, our accountant was coming to pick up the office ledger; I was supposed to recheck all the ledger entries that had been made since the beginning of the year before he arrived).

Some of the participants of the Mini Mariapolis (a day-long gathering) held in San Antonio, Texas. The theme of these gatherings, which are held all over the world, was "Working towards unity: 'That all may be one'."

A brief thought flashed through my mind: If I don't act like a true Christian in moments such as this, when will I ever do so? Perhaps when everything is going smoothly? I remembered then that we really did need a certain type of file cabinet in my office. I asked the salesman if he had one, how much it cost, and so forth. When he began to glance through his catalog, I realized that he wasn't at all experienced in this line of work. I asked if I could take a look at the catalog, and then attempted to show him how to use it.

He listened attentively and appeared to be relieved. Before leaving, he confided "I was out of work for two years. This is the last job I would have ever chosen to do. However, because of my family's financial situation, I had to resign myself to doing it in order to earn a few dollars. I just started doing this yesterday, and I've been turned away time and again. I made up my mind to stick it out for one more day . . . after that, I had nothing to look forward to but despair. You know, no one has the patience to listen to me. . . . Now I'm feeling confident once more. I'm going to try to treat people the way you've treated me, with the same kindness."

Alone once more, I suddenly remembered the entries that I still had to check. Preparing myself for a stern reprimand, I again became immersed in my work. Yet however strange it may seem, I felt truly peaceful in spite of the circumstances. The end of the day arrived, and the accountant had never shown up. He came the following day instead, just when I had finally finished balancing the accounts.

A.R. - Brazil

I'LL TAKE ALL THREE

Dineke and Leo had moved from Cuyk to Eindhoven in the Netherlands a short time before. They were still coping with the confusion resulting from the move; with placing the children in a new school, with the new neighbors who kept themselves somewhat aloof . . . Everything had yet to fall into place as part of a normal routine.

But in the midst of all this, the telephone rang. Dineke answered. "I'm a social worker from Cuyk," the voice on the other end explained. "I'm handling a rather urgent case." She proceeded to explain that one of Dineke's neighbors in Cuyk was in a desperate situation, her husband had been imprisoned a week before and she hadn't eaten

or slept for four days now. "She is in urgent need of medical attention," the social worker concluded. "She should be admitted to a hospital as soon as possible. As if that weren't enough, we have to arrange for someone to take care of her two year old daughter. You are the only person to whom the mother would grant temporary custody. Would you even consider it?"

Before making any decision on the matter Dineke expressed her concern about the fate of the woman's other two children. "We're trying to find an institution that will take them," the social worker replied. Her response was followed by a long period of silence. Then Dineke reached a decision: "I'll take all three of them," she stated.

"But how could you ever manage!" the social worker exclaimed. "You already have four of your own, and they are all so young! Talk it over with your husband first and see. I'll expect to hear from you tomorrow."

Dineke was thinking all the while about the anguish that the sick woman must have been going through. She knew that she had grown up in an orphanage, and that because of that experience she detested institutions and would be willing to do anything in the world in order to avoid letting her children be institutionalized. Dineke didn't feel that she could let her endure another 24 hours in that terrible state of uncertainty.

"I'll be coming to pick up the children tonight, with my husband," she said. "I'm sure that he will agree with my decision."

Everyone in Dineke's new neighborhood soon learned of the situation. That act of generosity dissolved the awkwardness which had marked their previous relations with Leo and Dineke, and unleashed all their goodwill. It was the start of a strong chain of friendship and solidarity: "My children are grown up now and I have a lot of free time," one woman commented. "I could come by a few times a week to help with the ironing. . ."
"My children don't need these clothes any longer. . . you can take them," another said. "I saw your clothes hanging out on the line and it occurred to me that in this weather they'll never get dry. Why don't you give them to me; I can put them in my dryer."
"When I saw you with those two little girls, I thought of a friend of mine who had twins a few years back; she would be very happy to give you her two-seated baby carriage." "If you have to go do some shopping, don't think twice about leaving the babies with me. . ."

Everyday has brought with it new surprises. There are those who offer to visit the mother in the hospital; those who pick her up in the car every now and then and bring her to see the children; those who go to see the father in prison. . . It now seems as though the entire neighborhood is becoming one big family.

O.P. - Netherlands

I HAD CHOSEN THE BETTER PART

An enthusiastic telephone call from across the ocean informed that my conference (which had been conducted under the auspices of Harvard University) had been very well received by those in attendance. My British colleague emphasized the favorable comments made by a certain PhD who is a recent Nobel Prize recipient — We had succeeded where others had given up.

I was overjoyed to hear the news. Many times, the pursuit of theoretical research can seem something superfluous. It can only be justified by the way in which it has been carried out. In that sense, these opinions expressed by persons competent in my field seemed to confirm the value of my efforts.

One thought crossed my mind: I had better get down to work and finish writing up my research findings so that they could then be mailed out to my American colleague in time for the next conference which was to take place at a large university in Berkeley. I decided to begin the very next day, and to remain home so that I would be better able to concentrate.

To tell the truth, however, I had earlier promised to devote the day to a discussion with one of my undergraduate students who is in his final year at the university.

In a split second many thoughts passed through my mind: the Nobel Prize winner, or the student . . . which one should take precedence? I decided in favor of the former. My colleague, too, could have been someone "to serve," and yet it seemed more in tune with the Gospel to give precedence to this student . . . who seemed to be in real need of my help.

The following day I met him at the university. He showed me the results of his research and asked for some explanations. We discussed his work. Then, while we headed over to the cafeteria together, I asked him how he had spent the weekend and how things were going with his girlfriend.

"Do you live with your parents?" I asked.

"Yes, with my mother," he replied. "But since I'm gone all day she leads a rather lonely life."

"And your father?" I inquired.

"He died twenty years ago," the young man replied.

"Twenty years ago . . . you must have been very young. . ."

"Yes. I was just three years old. My father died on my birthday. He fell out of a tree which he had climbed in order to pick some cherries for me."

His words betrayed his suffering. I was grateful for the few moments of silence which ensued as we waited to cross the street. As we stood in line at the cafeteria, we resumed our conversation.

"Twenty years have gone by," he said, "but my mother still goes to the cemetery every day. It's striking to see my father's grave, alongside so many others a bit neglected. It's been twenty years, but his always has fresh flowers."

I listened in silence. So this was the reason for that veil of sadness which I had often noted on the face of this young man. In light of his words, I felt that I could also understand what I myself must have meant to him in this, his final year at the University.

I was happy that I had the opportunity to share a few moments of this student's life. I was aware that my colleague on the other side of the Atlantic would perhaps speak on another topic; and that it might be a long while before the results of my research were appreciated. But deep down, I was still convinced that I had chosen "the better part."

M.C. - Italy

I WAS THE ONLY WOMAN, A STUDENT, AND A LEFT-HANDED ONE BESIDES...

I am a medical student and I was recently required to do a rotation in general surgery. However I had no interest in that aspect of medicine, and for many reasons I was dreading the start of that particular rotation. For one thing I was apprehensive about the subject matter. Then I was also concerned about how well I'd be able to handle the various aspects of surgery. I was nervous about going into the operating room, for instance: What would it be like?

There was also my interaction with the patients to think about: How would I deal with their fears and help them to adjust? I did not know the answers. And the surgeons . . . How would I relate to them? (I was sure that they would be able to tell that I didn't like surgery.) Furthermore, I knew that the hours I'd be required to work on this rotation would be very long (7 a.m. to 6 p.m. was considered a short day). When on call I would have to stay at the hospital from one evening until the following afternoon. As a student, I knew that I would also have exams to prepare for, and I was worried about whether or not I'd be able to find time to study.

I had had no prior exposure to surgery, and so I really did not know what to expect, but I had nothing to stimulate me either because I had already completed the rotations which I like most and which are in the areas I intend to pursue. In the back of my mind, I thought to myself that I would just get the job done there with a minimal amount of involvement.

I was assigned to a large city hospital, and my first day was dreadful. There was one emergency after another, and I had no time to gradually adjust to the situation as I had planned. I was thrown right into things, and before I knew it I had a patient before me. However I was so filled with apprehension that I barely even spoke to him. Within a few minutes I finished taking his medical history and then I left.

That night when I returned home I felt empty inside and decided that my attitude had to change. I saw that I really had to make myself one with the surgeons, patients and other hospital personnel, and I realized that in order to so this I would have to let go of all my fear and apprehension. This was the first step, my part. From then on, I really had to trust that God would help me.

With this new attitude, I began my first day in the operating room. It was quite an experience. Very little was expected of me, but the little I did have to do I did all wrong. Once I was finally properly dressed and everyone was ready to start the operation, I touched something that was not sterile and had to start all over again, making everyone wait. This process takes five to ten minutes, but to me it seemed like an eternity. I kept thinking about what a bad impression I was making on the surgeon, who was waiting patiently for me, but then I remembered that I had to let go of everything, even this.

As a student in surgery, my main objectives were to observe, to learn as much as possible, and

to assist the surgeon by handing him some of the instruments for instance. I am left-handed, and all of the surgical instruments are made for right-handed people. Therefore I had a lot of difficulty handling them which again caused this doctor to have to exercise patience with me. Yet I was really trying to make myself one with him, and this seemed to compel him to remain calm. It was a trying situation, but I was able to manage and everything ran pretty smoothly.

There were some days when I felt that also the fact that I was the only woman on the team did not help matters. I had the impression that the assignments given to me were the jobs that no one else wanted to do. At times it seemed that being the only woman on the team, a student, and a left-handed one besides, was just too much to handle. I felt really overwhelmed. Many times I was tempted to complain, yet I realized that this rotation was an expression of the will of God for me and therefore I could not object to it in any way.

The hours were very long and at times it was difficult for me to find a way to go to Mass. On certain days I was assigned to the trauma team. Those on this team were generally not permitted to leave the hospital all day. I decided that I would try anyway, and so I asked my chief resident to let me leave the hospital every day for Mass. He seemed surprised at my request but he said yes.

In the course of this rotation I had many opportunities to make myself one with the patients. When patients are in a lot of discomfort and pain they tend to ask the first person they see for help. However, around the hospital, jobs are divided up in a certain way: there are the things that doctors do, things that nurses do, and things that nurse's aides and orderlies do.

Many times as I went around, a patient would ask me to get a bed pan, or to roll down the bed or to get a box of tissues... I knew that I could very easily say, "I'll call a nurse for you. Just wait." But I felt that I could not consider myself above doing their jobs, and furthermore I was aware that if it were Jesus asking me to do those things I would not call a nurse. So I helped the patients in whatever ways I could. As a consequence my colleagues would tease me and say, "Are you training to be a doctor or what?"

In all these situations I experienced a great deal of anxiety. I couldn't help wondering if what I was doing would be held against me at the moment when these associates of mine would have to evaluate me for my grade. In my heart, however, I knew that at the end of my life God would be the one to eval-

Unity was also the theme of the gatherings for the very young in the Movement. In the photo below, a group in Toronto, Canada.

A group of young people during outdoor games while on a weekend in Tarrytown, New York.

uate me, and that it was before him alone that I had to act.

The two months of my surgical rotation passed very quickly and I soon found myself preparing for my final exams. I did the best that I could with the time I had left. A few days before the exams, some of the doctors I had been working with all this time stopped to ask me if I would be going into general surgery. I told them no. Then they went on to say that it was really too bad, because I was the best student that they had seen in a long time. I was shocked, and I realized that such a result could only be the consequence of my having made myself one with them in every situation.

I was even more shocked, however, when I went to take my oral exam in surgery and two doctors whom I had never seen before told me that they had heard that I was an excellent student. I realized that the doctors who had evaluated my work throughout those two months must have made that comment. During the exam these doctors tried to convince me to change my mind and specialize in surgery. In the end they gave me an *A* + with honors. For me, this was really a proof of the love God has for me. It made me see more clearly than ever that doing his will is what counts most of all.

F.L. - United States

BEFORE IT WAS I WHO SPOKE

One year ago, a neurological disease took away my power of speech, isolating me, to a great extent, from the rest of the world. My relations with other people are now fragmentary and difficult to carry on, because handwritten questions and answers are my only means of communication. My illness has also forced me to leave my teaching position for good, after twenty-eight years of work. And all of this has taken place in a climate of uncertainty about both the present and the future, because no one knows which part of my body this illness will strike next.

With the exception of some initial discouragement, I think that I've been able to accept this trial with serenity. Many times, I had offered my whole self to God; therefore, this too was included.

Since I am unable to take part in conversations, I've learned to listen more to the others; to avoid making snap judgements; and to look beyond external appearances. In this way, I'm discovering that every single person — among my relatives, acquaintances, friends — is truly a candidate for that unity for which Christ died.

Before, it was I who spoke. Now I let the others speak, and I

try to make their suffering, their trials and their difficulties my own. And in the end, nearly all of them are so relieved that they aren't even aware that I can no longer speak. I think this may be the contribution which God wants from me so that "all may be one."

R.V. - Italy

IT COULD BE THE LAST TIME

A few days ago I woke up with a sense of joy at the thought of having yet another day in which to love God. It was a day in which I had to work intensely, helping a friend of mine who was getting ready to take a very long trip the following afternoon. There were long reports to be written, many letters to be answered and quite a few telephone calls to be made.

Despite all the things to be done, my friend and I agreed that we had to go to the hospital to visit a very dear friend who was to undergo major surgery the next day.

At about 4 o'clock in the afternoon we set out for the hospital, which was not too far from our house. Our friend Mary was overjoyed at our surprise visit. She talked about many things. In fact, she confided that in spite of her illness the doctors had great hopes for her complete recovery. She was peaceful, and told us that she was offering her great suffering for the unity of all people.

Then she mentioned her roommate, an old lady who was very lonely. "Pray for her, please," our friend said. We stayed for about an hour with her and as we were leaving she accompanied us to the elevator. In the corridor we saw a frail figure approaching us. "It's my roommate," Mary said, and stopped to greet her warmly. She introduced us — and the lady, obviously happy to have someone to talk to, began to engage us in conversation.

The minutes were passing by, however it was clear that this lady was relishing our unexpected visit and certainly didn't want the conversation to end. We were in a bit of a hurry to leave, and so we were sorely tempted to say our goodbyes and be on our way. But how could we just rush off? So we stayed and talked for another while, trying to "make ourselves" one with her concerns.

Suddenly, in the middle of our conversation the lady leaned against the wall murmuring, "I feel sick . . . I'm dizzy." I was standing right next to her so I quickly grabbed her to prevent her from falling. A thought flashed across my mind. "What if these are her last moments?" I found myself bending to the floor with the frail little lady in my arms, my friends bending over us. Our love enveloped her.

Nurses immediately came running from everywhere, and we quietly moved away. In silence, we walked with Mary towards the elevator. There was really no need for words. There was a great sense of peace in us.

The next morning, just before going into the operating room, Mary called us from the hospital. She told us that the old lady had died right then and there. We had been the last people she had talked to.

It made me think and resolve to remember that each time I do something or talk to someone could really be the last time.

J.P. - United States

A CHANGE OF ATMOSPHERE

All week long it seemed that everybody was blaming me for things I had not done. In the middle of the week I felt really humiliated, but I knew that I had to keep loving everyone in every situation. I didn't always succeed and by the end of the week I was very upset. On Friday, when I came home from school, I wanted to just run to my room and cry.

As I came through the front door I noticed that my grandmother was sitting on the couch alone watching TV. Since my grandmother and I have always had a poor relationship, my first instinct was to run into my room out of fear of being humiliated again. Then I thought that Jesus had also been accused of doing things. He was humiliated to the end and he loved to the end. So to be like him meant to love my grandmother. I went over, sat next to her, and started to watch TV with her.

As soon as I started getting interested in the program, she began talking to me. Immediately I had to stop watching TV and give my attention to my grandmother. After we talked she seemed really happy. I continued to love her by doing chores around the house and driving her to the store when she needed something. I was so occupied with concretely loving her that I forgot all about my problems.

After a few days, the relationship between my grandmother and I changed from negative to positive. Everyone in the family has seemed to notice the change of atmosphere between us.

T.S. - United States

"I have put you among your neighbors so that you can do for them what you cannot do for me – that is, love them without any concern for thanks and without looking for any profit for yourself. And whatever you do for them I will consider done for me."

Saint Catherine of Siena - *The Dialogue*

WORD OF LIFE

"The whole of the Law
is summarized
in a single command:
*Love your neighbor
as yourself*"
(Gal. 45:14)

The word makes us live.

The word makes us free.

The word guarantees happiness.

The word converts.

The word purifies us.

The word draws us to our specific vocations.

The word brings forth the hatred of the world and the sanctity of the disciple.

The word makes us see the truth.

The word brings comfort.

The word gives us joy.

The word produces works.

The word gives wisdom.

The word preserves us from human concerns.

The word obtains everything.

The word brings about union with God.

The word gives us hope of eternal life.

The word makes us one.

The word changes one's mentality.

The word makes each soul a heaven.

This sentence was said by the Apostle Paul. It is brief, precise, explicit and truly wonderful.

It tells us that love of neighbor must be the basis and constant inspiration of the Christian way of life.

For the Apostle, the fulfillment of the Law lies in practicing this command. The Law, in fact, speaks of not committing adultery, not killing, not stealing, not coveting. . . . And we know that those who love do not do these things. Those who love do not kill or steal, etc.

"**The whole of the Law is summarized in a single command:** *Love your neighbor as yourself.*"

Those who love, however, do not merely avoid evil. They are open to others; they desire good and accomplish it; they give of themselves, going so far as to give their very lives for their neighbor.

For this reason, Paul writes that when we love our neighbor, we are not merely observing a single command because — "the whole of the Law" is summarized in it.

"**The whole of the Law is summarized in a single command:** *Love your neighbor as yourself.*"

If the whole of the Law is summed up in love of neighbor, the other commandments must be seen as means to enlighten and guide us in finding the way to love others in the often complex situations of life. We must become aware of God's purpose in giving us the other commandments, of his will for us expressed in them. He wants us to be obedient, chaste, mortified in our passions, meek, merciful, poor and so on, in order to better fulfill the commandment of love.

"**The whole of the Law is summarized in a single command:** *Love your neighbor as yourself.*"

Here we could ask, "Why doesn't the Apostle mention love of God?"

The fact is that love of God and love of neighbor are not in competition with one another. Indeed, love of neighbor is an expression of our love of God.

Loving God means doing his will. And his will is that we love our neighbor.

"**The whole of the Law is summarized in a single command:** *Love your neighbor as yourself.*"

How can we put this word of life into practice?

By loving our neighbor, truly loving our neighbor.

This means giving of ourselves without self-interest.

We are not loving if we use our neighbor to further our own interests, even spiritual ones, such as our own sanctification. We must love our neighbor, not ourselves.

We can be certain, however, that those who love in this way *will* reach sanctity; they will be "perfect as the Father is perfect" because they will have done the best possible thing. Having understood the will of God and put it into practice, they will have fulfilled the Law.

And isn't *this* love the only thing we will be examined on at the end of our lives?

Chiara Lubich

EXPERIENCES

The following are experiences in living the Gospel which some of our readers have shared with us.

THE "TERROR" OF THE CLASSROOM

This year I was assigned to a new school in another state. I was a little concerned about that assignment because I had taught in that same school many years before and I had found much opposition from parents who said they wanted discipline but in reality did not, and from students who were, in my opinion, quite undisciplined and rather sophisticated. But my greatest fear was of myself — I know what happens when my temper is aroused. This is a cross that haunts me always. And as soon as I think it is conquered, I fall so badly that is is a tremendous struggle to begin again.

However, I wanted to accept this new assignment because it seemed what God wanted from me at the moment. I thought I might discuss my fears with the principal, but I was even unable to do that because of extra work and conflicting schedules during the summer.

The word of life in August was "Nothing that goes into a man from outside can make him unclean: it is the things that come out of a man that make him unclean" (Mk. 7:15). And I knew that the anger came out of me. The commentary explained that ". . . he also knows our human nature, however, and the human tendency towards evil, thus he demands that we convert." I really wanted to do that so badly and I decided to try. I made up my mind that I would love every new person I would meet, and especially every new student, no matter what.

Well, I didn't have to wait long to practice this decision. At the very first faculty in-service day, before the students even came in, I was informed by at least three or four other teachers that a child I was getting in my class was the terror of the school. He had actually hit other teachers in previous years and had been on the verge of being expelled, but was being given one last chance. Well, I was petrified! But I thought, "No, I have to conquer this; I won't pay attention to any of these reports from others (I wish they hadn't told me) and I will look at this student with new eyes and love him even if it kills me."

On the first day of school two sweet little girls were the first to arrive and right after them came the "notorious" student. And it was exactly as the others had said — he came in saying "Yuk! I hate school!" He had such a scowl on his face and began making terrible remarks to anyone who would listen.

Of course I couldn't just stand there and let him continue. So I asked him to come out into the hallway. My heart was pounding. I told him that I would not permit him to begin school like this and that he would have to stop his actions and remarks before he would be allowed back into the room. I tried to speak as gently as I could and yet be as firm as I could. This is not easy for me, but I knew I had decided to love this child and I was determined to do it. He gave in reluctantly and we went back into the room.

All during that day and the entire first week of school this student tried every possible means of trying me out — blurting out, making smart remarks, jumping out of his seat, looking around to see that he had everyone's attention. But I was as determined as he was. I never lost my temper with him all that week. The other students who waited for the bus after school began telling me of all the previous years' episodes with him, but I discouraged them from doing this and told them that it was a new year and that I did not care to listen to what had happened before. In fact, I tried to help these children see that the traumas in the "notorious" student's life were probably the reason why he acted the way he did. (He had lost his mother fourteen months after his birth, his older brother had been killed in a motorcycle accident and his father had recently had a heart attack. However, I wasn't too sure if I could continue being patient much longer. Even the remembrance of those traumas didn't always help me to remain calm.

When I walked into Church for Mass on Friday of the first week of school, there sat my student and his stepmother. I knew I'd have to tell her what was going on in the classroom. I had been holding out from doing so since it was early in the term, but I felt that this was the time to do it. So after Mass I spoke to her about her son and asked to make an appointment with her. She seemed crushed to think that he was acting up already. I really felt terrible that I had to tell her. However, we set up a time for a conference.

That entire first week of school I could not get this child off my mind. I prayed for him constantly. I had been so determined to love; surely the Lord would help me and him, but things weren't looking too good.

By this time the new word of life had come: "And if your foot should cause you to sin, cut it off; it is better for you to enter into life lame, than to have two feet and be thrown into Gehenna" (Mk. 9:45). This was an even harder phrase to live than the month before. The commentary read: "We cannot follow Jesus if we do not deny ourselves and love our own cross." And I had a double cross — myself and my student! So I had to love, no matter what.

So I did, and I still am. A few months have passed. I know my little friend feels this love, not only because of the shiny apple he brings me almost daily, but also because of the way he walks into my room these days with a smile on his face and a "Good Morning, Sister." He never leaves for his bus without saying goodbye and wishing me a good evening or a good weekend.

The principal and secretary are amazed. In fact they "miss" seeing him in the office where he used to spend so much of his time in previous years. When they ask him what happened he says, "I don't know. Something just struck me."

Usually teachers don't get to see immediate results of their teaching, even in their best behaved students. But I experienced the hundredfold in my "notorious" student right now.

Sr. L.D.

PEACE IN THE WORKSHOP

Where I work, there are many people in one area and almost everyone there has worked together for several years. This familiarity sometimes breeds contempt in that the little tensions often give rise to large issues. Sometimes the friction is very strong.

I've tried to do my best to interject some positiveness into these tense moments by either taking it upon myself to do a task that others are arguing about who should do it, or by lightening up an otherwise argumentative conversation. I never knew what effect this had on the atmosphere in the shop, and truthfully, I sometimes saw it as having no effect at all. It seemed like a waste of time to do these things because nobody seemed to try to change.

The other day I was operating a machine which is rather noisy, so much so that when it was running, other people had to speak loudly to make themselves heard. While operating this machine, I could hear the raised voices and I assumed it was due to the noisy machine.

After a few minutes, somebody came up to me and said, "You'd better go bring some peace over there because those three are ready to start fighting." I immediately shut off the machine and turned around to see what was happening. At that moment, the supervisor sent one who was involved in the argument over to me and asked me to go do a job with him to help him cool off. So I tried to make myself "one" with him and also with the others who had been arguing.

By the end of the afternoon, I had two of them laughing and the third one was talking again, if only to me.

The word of life for the month was "I am ... the life" (Jn. 14:6). So trying to bring some of the life of Jesus, his love, into that volatile situation, has helped to bring some harmony into the shop atmosphere.

R.B.

FAMILY LIFE

Weakened family life is one of the greatest social ills of our time.
The "New Family" Movement has as its aim to bring the Focolare spirit of unity into family life, so that each family will be deeply united within itself and with other families.

MY SON AND I

I have an older son who sometime ago got involved with some friends in high school whom I didn't like. He started doing things that I didn't approve of and I thought, "Well, he's not going to go through his teenage years thinking that what he's doing is perfectly fine. I'm going to make it clear to him everytime that he does something wrong that he *is* doing something wrong." And that is exactly what I did.

I would drive him to school and just let him have it. I told him over and over all the things I didn't agree with. I did the same thing even at the dinner table with the whole family there and then later on in the evening when he came home after being out. Little by little the very beautiful dialogue we had had when he was younger disappeared. Pretty soon he even started talking back to me in front of the rest of the family. What was I doing wrong?

I talked it over with my wife and it became clear that I was judging him. I placed no trust in him even when he was not doing anything wrong. As I thought it over, I realized I really was not loving my son by correcting him constantly and in public. I decided that I would start by not saying anything to him especially at the supper table. I remember that a few times I really had to bite my tongue. As we would be driving to school sometimes I really felt like saying something. Instead I said to myself "No, I have already told him. He knows." For a period of time, whenever we were together, there was silence between us, but it didn't last too long. In a short time he started to confide things to me again, to talk to me and I would answer him and give him my opinion and my advice. Little by little I noticed that the dialogue we had once had was coming back again. All of a sudden I realized that my son had not been the one holding back this dialogue; it was I. I had placed a judgment on him and I had created this barrier. All it took was a change on my part and he was open with me once again.

H. B.

EACH ONE OF US COULD BEGIN AGAIN

It was about eleven or twelve o'clock at night. I was in bed and on the verge of falling asleep when I heard the key in the lock and the door open. John had finally come home. He hadn't called so I assumed, as always, that he had been out drinking. "I wonder if it's still snowing," I thought to myself. It was already mid-April but snow at that time of year was really not unusual in our mountain town. I imagined all the snow and mud that John had probably tracked into the house and I was glad I was already in bed so I could avoid seeing him in that condition. After all what was the point. We couldn't talk about anything sensible or he would get angry at my silence and accuse me of all kinds of things. Things would be better in the morning.

But as I lay there I could hear him talking to himself very angrily. Our neighbors are going to hear all this. Something must have happened during the day to upset him and now, without much self-control, he was screaming at his imaginary enemy. Maybe I should get up. Maybe it would help. Hadn't I decided in my life that I wanted to try and love Jesus in every neighbor but especially in the suffering, those looked down upon by others. That was certainly John at that moment and I was pretending to be asleep, hoping not to have to be involved with this suffering person. I got up and put on my robe and slippers and went into the kitchen.

The bright lights were hard to bear. And there was John screaming to himself. I said "Hi," and acted casually, as though I had just felt like getting up at the moment. I started to make myself a cup of tea and sat down at the table. I began looking through the newspaper. I couldn't say anything, but I tried to communicate my love by just being there at that hour, with a love that draws near to suffering.

John slumped down in a chair and just sat there. After a short time he went to bed. I followed.

The next day, instead of the usual strained feelings of guilt on his part and disappointment or anger on mine, there was an atmosphere in which everything was understood without words, in which each of us could begin again.

L.R.

The young and the Gospel

One day my mother was working outside and so was my father. When they were outside I noticed that the dishes were dirty and the floor was dirty, too. There was nobody to wash the dishes or clean the floor. So I decided to wash the dishes and clean the floor to love Jesus in my mother and father. When my mother got inside and saw the clean dishes and the clean floor she hugged me and she was happy.

Claudia
9 years old

I had a candy cane and my sister came and wanted a piece. Instead I gave her the whole thing to love Jesus in her. I got the hundredfold because my mother came along and gave me another candy cane.

Jennie
10 years old

One day I was going to my cousin's house but my mom said I had to stay home and watch my younger brother for the whole day. I was about to say no but then I thought that to love Jesus in her I could stay home and watch my younger brother, and so I did.

Michelle
13 years old

One day at school a girl wanted me to help her to study. I wasn't about to say yes because I was going to have the same test as her and I wanted to study myself.

I remembered that I should love her and so I helped her as much as I could. I got the hundredfold because I ended up with a lot of time to study and I got a good grade on the test.

Marimel
12 years old

On Wednesday night we went to the park because it was my friend's birthday. When we got to the park everyone got on the see-saws. Then a girl came. Her name is Maria. She asked us if she could get on the see-saws, too. We said yes, but then nobody wanted to get on with her because no one really liked her very much. But then I wanted to love Jesus in her so I got on with her and she was very happy.

Claudia
9 years old

At the Gen girls' convention this year we were playing Simon Says. I won and another girl asked if she could be Simon. I wanted to be Simon but instead of saying no I loved Jesus in her and said she could be Simon. She was very happy.

Edie
10 years old

MARIAPOLIS 1983

"WORKING FOR A MORE UNITED WORLD"

The 1983 Mariapolis will be an extraordinary opportunity to learn, to grow, to share and above all to experience unity which is the basis and goal of the Christian community. You, your family and friends and all those interested in knowing more about the Focolare spirituality are cordially invited to attend.

The Mariapolis are the summer meetings of the Focolare, held every year, for those who wish to come into contact with it.

For one week the Mariapolis offers to hundreds of people of all ages and walks of life a very full program that includes general sessions with talks on the spirituality of unity, sharing of experiences in living this spirituality, documentaries, meetings in small sharing groups and recreational programs. The Mariapolis is a time for prayer and recollection. The celebration of the Eucharist is at the center of each day and all participants gather together at the conclusion of the activities for evening prayer.

Children have separate activities which involve them in the life of the Mariapolis through various spiritual and recreational programs. Special programs are available for teenagers as well.

The week, however, is more than the sum of its parts. It is an experience of how life, also every day life, can be transformed if love and unity are its foundation. When the Mariapolis ends, people find that it was not only a tremendously enjoyable week, but they have experienced a way of living that they will be able to bring back home.

CARIBBEAN: (in Spanish only)

This year there will also be a Mariapolis held in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. **It will be in Spanish only.** Space is limited. Invitations are being sent only to Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic.

SOUTHWEST:

New Mexico Highlands University
Las Vegas, New Mexico
June 26, after supper - July 2, after breakfast

Las Vegas is in the northern part of New Mexico, the "land of enchantment." It is located about 60 miles east of Santa Fe, at an altitude of 6,500 feet. It is an historic community with a population of approximately 15,000 people. The main route of the famous Santa Fe Trail passes through the New Mexico Highlands University campus where - here and in the surrounding area - the "Wild West" was actually lived. Las Vegas is located on Interstate 25. The nearest large airport is in Albuquerque, 120 miles away. Las Vegas is readily accessible by Greyhound bus and Amtrak train.

MIDWEST:

University of Wisconsin
Platteville, Wisconsin
July 3, after supper - July 9, after breakfast

Hidden Valleys, set amid the green hills and outcroppings of southwest Wisconsin, is the scenic region where melting glaciers left numerous mini-mountains and deep valleys. Here in this beautiful and varied countryside lies the small town of Platteville and the University of Wisconsin campus. Located 22 miles northeast of Dubuque, Iowa, and 62 miles southwest of Madison, Wisconsin, the area is a scenic delight. Enjoy route 151 if you are coming from the southwest or the north. Those travelling from the south and southeast will enjoy the many picturesque spots along Route 11.

NORTHWEST:

Western Washington University
Bellingham, Washington
July 10, after supper - July 16, after breakfast

Western Washington University is situated in the hills overlooking the city of Bellingham, the bay, and many of the San Juan Islands. Its architectural blend of the traditional and the modern reflects the majestic beauty of the Pacific Northwest. Modern freeways bring Seattle and Vancouver within easy driving distance. Bellingham is situated 22 miles south of the Canadian border and 90 miles north of Seattle. The nearest large airports are in Vancouver, B.C., Canada and Seattle-Tacoma, Washington. Don't forget you'll have to cross the border if you land in Vancouver. Bellingham is readily accessible by Greyhound bus and Amtrak train.

EAST COAST:

Fordham University
Rose Hill Campus, Bronx, New York
August 8, after supper - August 14, after breakfast

On these 90 acres of land in what is now the borough of the Bronx, Bishop John Hughes of New York City formally opened a college, now Fordham University. The history of Fordham comes most vividly alive in small fragments from its records and archives. On your first visit to Rose Hill, for example, you will be walking over broad lawns where Edgar Allen Poe composed some of his finest poems. Rose Hill can best be described as *rus in urbe* (countryside within the city), and there are two neighboring territories which distinctively enhance the campus' reputation as an academic grove surrounded by a sprawling metropolis. To the east of Rose Hill is the New York Botanical Garden — the largest of its kind in the country; to the south of the Garden is the Bronx Zoo — the largest urban zoo in America. The campus is easily accessible from Route 9, the New York Thruway, the Cross Westchester Expressway, and the Taconic, Sprain Bronx River and Saw Mill Parkways.

SOUTHWEST MARIAPOLIS

New Mexico Highlands University
Las Vegas, New Mexico
June 26, after supper to
July 2, after breakfast

MIDWEST MARIAPOLIS

University of Wisconsin
Platteville, Wisconsin
July 3, after supper to
July 9, after breakfast

NORTHWEST MARIAPOLIS

Western Washington University
Bellingham, Washington
July 10, after supper to
July 16, after breakfast

EAST COAST MARIAPOLIS

Fordham University
Rose Hill Campus, Bronx, New York
August 8, after supper to
August 14, after breakfast

THE 1983 MARIAPOLIS

"WORKING FOR A MORE UNITED WORLD"

"Unity is an extraordinary reality, a supernatural one . . .
It is the presence of Jesus in our midst, the Risen Lord.
Jesus said: 'And know that I am with you always, until the end of the world' (Mt. 28:20).
And we can find him in the Eucharist, in our bishops, in his word, in our neighbor especially in the poor and the weak.
He will also be present in our midst
if we love one another as he loved us.
"The world today is particularly sensitive to this presence of Jesus..." (From a talk by Chiara Lubich to the Focolare community of Switzerland.)

The Mariapolis offers an experience of unity. It is a sign of hope and a step toward a more united world.

3 3

Special services provided:
Children's Program - Nursery facilities

Simultaneous translations:
SOUTHWEST: Spanish
EAST COAST: French and Spanish

(When you check for translation please indicate how many people will be needing it.)

Priests should bring their own alb and stole for concelebration.

We cannot provide accommodations prior to the beginning or after the ending of the Mariapolis.

If small children who are not required to pay for accommodations (see each Mariapolis for age limit) use a bed, they will have to pay for it.

Young people under 18 years of age unaccompanied by a parent must have a permission slip signed by a parent.

Trailers permitted only at the Northwest Mariapolis. Participants planning to come with trailers should write for rates and conditions. Trailers must be self-contained.

Pets are not allowed in dormitories.

1 2

YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS

_____

_____

PLACE STAMP HERE

FOCOLARE MOVEMENT—MARIAPOLIS

_____

_____

Where to send your registration:

OR SOUTHWEST MARIAPOLIS TO:
Focolare Movement - Mariapolis
P.O. Box 71701
Los Angeles, CA 90071 OR
Focolare Movement - Mariapolis
P.O. Box 32302
San Antonio, TX 78216

FOR MIDWEST MARIAPOLIS TO:
Focolare Movement - Mariapolis
P.O. Box 53426
Chicago, IL 60653

FOR NORTHWEST MARIAPOLIS TO:
Focolare Movement - Mariapolis
P.O. Box 82626
North Burnaby, B.C.
Canada V5C 5W5 OR
Focolare Movement - Mariapolis
P.O. Box 71701
Los Angeles, CA 90071 OR
Focolare Movement - Mariapolis
P.O. Box 302 - Stn. T
Toronto, Ontario
Canada M6B 4A3

FOR EAST COAST MARIAPOLIS TO:
Focolare Movement - Mariapolis
P.O. Box 496
New York, NY 10021 OR
Focolare Movement - Mariapolis
P.O. Box 4958
Washington, DC 20008 OR
Focolare Movement - Mariapolis
P.O. Box 302 - Stn. T
Toronto, Ontario
Canada M6B 4A3

Terms of payment

Registration: The registration fee is not included in the accommodations fee. Please note fees and deadlines for registration and accommodations under specification for each Mariapolis. Late registration fee: US$5 additional.

Young people up to 18 years of age (Northwest 19 years) accompanied by their parents should register using the same form even though fee is not required.

Your cancelled check is your receipt.

Cancellations in writing received prior to dates indicated for each Mariapolis will be given full refund. After this date money is transferable to another person but not refundable.

Daily rates available for those not attending the whole week.

Accommodations are in college dorms or apartments with double occupancy rooms. A limited number of single rooms are available at each location for an additional charge of US$18

To register for 1983 Mariapolis
please fill in the registration form

1. Tear off page.
2. Cut along dotted lines.

please read carefully detailed information
on both sides of the form

SOUTHWEST MARIAPOLIS

Las Vegas, New Mexico
June 26, after supper to July 2, after breakfast

EGISTRATION FEE
ingle person.....US$ 75
oung adult (12-18 years).....US$ 20
hildren (3-11 years).....US$ 10
larried couple or family maximum.....US$120
vith children under 18)

CCOMMODATIONS: (meals and lodging)
dults.....US$120
oung people (12-18 years).....US$120
hildren (3-11 years).....US$ 50

lo accommodation fee for children under 3 unless they use a ed, in which case the fee is US$30. Please specify on the egistration form if so desired.

lo towels provided, please bring your own.

Registration fee due by **June 1** . No trailers permitted.
Payment in full due by **June 14** .
Full refund for cancellations received in writing by **June 17**.

SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATIONS:
Spanish ☐ # (Please check if needed and specify number)

MIDWEST MARIAPOLIS

Platteville, Wisconsin
July 3, after supper to July 9, after breakfast

REGISTRATION FEE
Single person.....US$ 75
Young adult (12-18 years).....US$ 20
Children (2-11 years).....US$ 10
Married couple or family maximum.....US$120
(with children under 18)

ACCOMMODATIONS: (meals and lodging)
Adults.....US$120
Young people (12-18 years).....US$120
Children (2-11 years).....US$ 70

No accommodation fee for children under 2 unless they use a bed, in which case the fee is US$40.

Accommodation fee for children under 5 with sleeping bags in their parents' room is US$40 (maximum 2 per room).

Accommodation fee for children between 5 and 11 with sleeping bags in their parents' room is US$50 (maximum 2 per room). Please specify on the registration form if so desired.

Registration fee due by **June 3** . No trailers permitted.
Full amount must be paid by **June 14** .
Full refund for cancellations received in writing by **June 17**.

NORTHWEST MARIAPOLIS

Bellingham, Washington
July 10, after supper to July 16, after breakfast

REGISTRATION FEE
Single person.....US$ 75
Young adult (11-19 years).....US$ 20
Children (2-10 years).....US$ 10
Married couple or family maximum.....US$150
(with children under 18)

ACCOMMODATIONS: (meals and lodging)
Adults.....US$130
Young people (11-18 years).....US$ 95
Children (2-10 years).....US$ 70

No accommodation fee for children under 2 unless they use a bed, in which case the fee is US$40.

Accommodations - Special rates:
For children 2-10 who sleep in their parents' room with sleeping bags the fee is US$30 (maximum 2 per room).
For young people 11-18 with sleeping bags in their parents' room the fee is US$70 (maximum 2 per room). Please specify on the registration form if so desired.

Meals only:
Adults and young people (11-18 years).....US$ 55
Children (2-10 years).....US$ 30

Registration fee due by **June 4** .
Full amount must be paid by **June 25** .
Full refund for cancellations received in writing by **June 30**.

EAST COAST MARIAPOLIS

Bronx, New York
August 8, after supper to August 14, after breakfast

REGISTRATION FEE
Single person.....US$ 75
Young adult (12-18 years).....US$ 20
Children (3-11 years).....US$ 10
Married couple or family maximum.....US$150
(with children under 18)

ACCOMMODATIONS: (meals and lodging)
Adults.....US$135
Young people (12-18 years).....US$120
Children (3-11 years).....US$ 96

No accommodation fee for children under 3 unless they use a bed, in which case the fee is US$60.

Accommodations - Special rates:
For children 3-11 years of age who sleep in their parents' room with sleeping bags the fee is US$45 (maximum of 2 per room).
For young people 12-18 with sleeping bags in their parents' room the fee is US$90 (maximum 2 per room). Please specify on the registration form if so desired.

For limited stay there is an additional charge of US$1 per night for 3-4-5 nights and US$3 per night for 1-2 nights.

Registration fee due by **July 14**. No trailers permitted.
Full amount must be paid by **July 23**.
Full refund for cancellations received in writing by **July 28**.

SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATIONS: ☐ French ☐ Spanish
(Please check if needed and specify number) #

I/We will attend the –

- ☐ SOUTHWEST MARIAPOLIS
- ☐ MIDWEST MARIAPOLIS
- ☐ NORTHWEST MARIAPOLIS
- ☐ EAST COAST MARIAPOLIS

NAME(S) OF PARTICIPANT(S)
[Please indicate age and sex of participant(s) under 18 years of age.]

LAST NAME: _____ **FIRST NAME:**

Mr. ☐ **Mrs.** ☐ **Miss** ☐ _____

Mr. ☐ **Mrs.** ☐ **Miss** ☐ _____

Mr. ☐ **Mrs.** ☐ **Miss** ☐ _____

Mr. ☐ **Mrs.** ☐ **Miss** ☐ _____

Mr. ☐ **Mrs.** ☐ **Miss** ☐ _____

ADDRESS: _____
Street City

_____
State Zip Tel.

REGISTRATION(S):
single persons $ _____ couple $ _____ Total $ _____

ACCOMMODATIONS:
children $ _____ adults $ _____ Total $ _____
and youth
Amount enclosed $ _____

(Please make check payable to Focolare Movement in US$)

If you plan to participate in only a part of the Mariapolis please check below—

DAY OF ARRIVAL: _____
breakfast ☐ lunch ☐ dinner ☐

DAY OF DEPARTURE: _____
breakfast ☐ lunch ☐ dinner ☐

I will come by car and can offer _____ number of seats.

Please send me more information about group fare Bus ☐

What is the Focolare Movement?

THE BEGINNINGS

FOCOLARE means "hearth," "family fireside." What first strikes people when they come in contact with members of the Focolare, whether in small groups or in large gatherings, is the atmosphere of a family. It is a family formed by many different people in various walks of life. The Focolare Movement is also known as the "Work of Mary." Under this name it was approved by Pope John XXIII in 1962.

The Focolare Movement began in 1943 in Italy. In the midst of the terrible destruction of World War II, Chiara Lubich realized that God is the only one worth living for. As a result, she began to center her life on the Gospel, together with a small group of young women who followed her. Their ideal became one of striving toward the fulfillment of Jesus' last prayer to the Father: "May they all be one" (Jn.17:21).

The life of Chiara and her first companions, and the spiritual way they spontaneously followed, gave rise to the unique form of spirituality of the Focolare Movement, a spirituality of unity. It has proved to be a powerful means of introducing the Gospel into modern life, of going to God together.

WHO ARE THE FOCOLARINI

Single men and women live in separate communities called Focolare Centers. Their principal aim is to achieve unity among themselves through mutual charity practiced twenty-four hours a day. They follow the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience. They work as other laymen and women in regular jobs and professions.

Some married persons, even though continuing to live in their families, participate fully in the life of either the men's or women's Focolare Centers in their common effort to achieve this same unity. They are called "Married Focolarini" and form the backbone of a vast Movement within the Movement, called the New Family Movement.

THE VOLUNTEERS AND THE NEW HUMANITY MOVEMENT

The Volunteers, also called the "Volunteers of God," are a large group within the Focolare Movement; they would like to transform all human realities according to the Gospel spirit. The Volunteers are the backbone of the mass movement called New Humanity. The aim of this Movement is to help form a society made of men and women who are made "new" by the Gospel message and who can then bring new life to all fields of human activity (education, business, etc.). This results in new social relationships which, in turn, lead to the realization of new structures of society.

GEN

The new generations of the Focolare Movement form another Movement or, better, three movements: the Gen 2, the Gen 3 and the Gen 4 Movements, divided according to their various age groups. "Gen" stands for new generation. The Gen have committed themselves to living the Gospel message of love and to sharing with other youth the conviction they have that the Gospel is the answer to every question and the motive for everything they do.

THE MOVEMENT AMONG THE RELIGIOUS

Men and women religious — although they live according to their own rules and constitutions and are already a distinct part of the Church through their religious families — can also be associated with the Focolare.

Contact with the Movement helps them to focus their attention on the specific charism of their founders, and to see how it can be lived in the present time.

PRIESTS — PRIESTS' MOVEMENT —SEMINARIANS — PARISH MOVEMENT

Many diocesan priests are committed to living the spirituality of the Focolare Movement. Some of them live in community. They form the backbone of the Priests' Movement which is made up of priests who live the spirituality of unity.

FOCOLARE FAMILY

The largest group within the Focolare Movement is made up of men, women and young people who are connected with the Movement without having any formal ties with it. Their bond of unity stems from their acceptance of its spirit and their desire to live it.

ECUMENISM

The Movement not only crossed the political boundaries of more than 100 countries, it has also gone beyond the barriers erected for centuries between the various Christian Churches.

Ecumenical activities take place in the different parts of the world where the Movement exists.

In the past few years a promising, ongoing dialogue has been established with faithful of other religions.

SUMMER MARIAPOLIS

Summer meetings are held every year for those interested in the Movement and for those who wish to come into contact with it. For one week persons of all ages and walks of life are exposed to the spirituality of unity. Above all, they strive to practice it by creating among themselves a rapport that molds them into a community. It is intended to be a basic experience of such intense unity that the people will be able to bring it back into their own environments. And this is the most striking fruit of these conventions. They tend to be models of a world which lives according the Gospel.

PERMANENT MARIAPOLIS

The need to prolong the experience of the summer meetings brought about the birth of small cities called Permanent Mariapolis. They are made up of young men and women, as well as whole families, who are there for a designated period of time to be formed according to the Gospel spirit of unity.

They also attend classes in Sacred Scripture, Theology and Sociology and work for their own support.

MARIAPOLIS CENTERS

In addition to the Permanent Mariapolis, there are Mariapolis Centers, which are training centers for the members of the Movement.

FOCOLARE ADDRESSES IN NORTH AMERICA

CHICAGO:
P.O. Box 53426
Chicago, IL 60653

SAN ANTONIO:
P.O. Box 32302
San Antonio. TX 78216

NEW YORK:
P.O. Box 496
New York, NY 10021

BOSTON:
P.O. Box 239
Roslindale, MA 02131

WASHINGTON, DC:
P.O. Box 4958
Washington, DC 20008

LOS ANGELES
P.O. Box 71701
Los Angeles, CA 90071

TORONTO:
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